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Dear Permission to be Powerful Reader, I've never, in my whole life,
done...



Dear *Permission to be Powerful* Reader,

I've never, in my whole life, done 100% me for Christmas.

It's very illuminating what kind of person I am at my core. Just this alone is worth trying sometimes. I think.

I always get sad around [the holidays](#).

At [this version of Mike Tyson](#), I realized I thought it was because I felt lonely around the holidays. It's actually because every holiday season, I abandon myself.

I spend time with people who I don't like. Who don't value me? Who can't see me?

Who don't deserve me?

They reinforce the idea that I have no worth. I will do my [private meditation](#) marathon, which involves lots of running and [writing](#).

I'm going full Chris McCandless.

I'm doing me 100%.

I'm going to shine more brightly than ever.

Just ONE year ago, I was still so heavily programmed to prioritize others over myself that I spent THOUSANDS to go and spend almost a month among a bunch of people I don't particularly like being around.

I was around many people who would NEVER go out of their way to come and see me.

I am still in a one-sided dynamic with my entire family. I'm single, have no kids, and on a low-contact basis with my kin. I've never had Christmas all to myself.

I Don't Feel Sad at All.

I know this might have left me [feeling depressed in past years](#). Not today. I used to suffer from pathological loneliness. It caused me so much trouble.

Because I was neglected growing up, I have had a pronounced desire to find a partner for my whole life.

This wasn't just about connecting with somebody. It was also about feeding a malnourished soul. It was about validation.

But today, I have permitted myself to enjoy being single. Even if my life does not follow a conventional path. I've never been traditional. I was so eager to find somebody to love, but that eagerness was unhealthy.

I think, on some level, it means not being able to walk away after seeing red flags and staying in relationships WAY past their expiration date.

I am a big believer in the expiration date of relationships.

This is the point by which, if you were healthy, you would decide to break up with someone. Knowing what I know now. Having changed my standards completely...

My ex-wife wouldn't have made it past the third week.

Generously, we should have broken up by year five. Why? There comes a point in a relationship when staying means abandoning yourself.

If you wake up one day and your partner hits you, it is cruel, hurtful, wild, entirely out of control...

If you realize they will not change.

If you know your non-negotiables and they don't live up to that standard... It's time to go.

But I'd say most people can't be so logical about romance. Most people don't even know what their non-negotiables are.

After you've bonded with someone, it can be easy to start getting ideas about the relationship that do not serve you. Nothing lasts forever. Not one thing.

People come and go.

Sooner or later, they WILL have to go. That part isn't up to you. It's the law of the universe. Everything comes and goes.

But we can get invested in faulty ideas about love. You might struggle with letting go.

I know I do. It took me a whole year to get over my last relationship. I don't think feeling so attached for so long is good.

But I certainly could have moved on more quickly. Sometimes, people stay in relationships for unhealthy reasons.

I believe in letting go of people who do not value me, even if it's my blood, because experience has shown me that this is the better choice.

That can be hard advice to follow if you've spent your life around people who invalidate you.

You are vulnerable if you have spent your whole life around people who make you feel unseen. There's a hole in your heart that needs filling.

So, when you finally find somebody who does make you feel heard, seen, and valued...

it's going to be hard to let go of your new drug. But sometimes you must. If the relationship is on shaky ground, things can go sideways whether you want them to.

But either way, I think it's usually a mistake to stay in a relationship past that expiration date.

You should not have to abandon yourself as a condition of meeting your need for love and connection. I already talked about what constitutes a good relationship.

There are some ingredients that a healthy relationship can't exist without. Honesty. In other words, if you wake up and find out you married a

pathological liar... you got the wrong one.

Respect. If you devalue your partner, you undermine the entire relationship. Safety. If you introduce violence or some other destabilizing force to the relationship, it will make things worse.

Moreover, recovering these non-negotiables is extremely difficult once they are gone.

If someone hits you, that changes how you see them forever. You'll never be able to look at them the same way afterward.

And, if you stay with someone who hits you, you are abandoning yourself. My inner child is always keeping score.

The total adds up to my integrity.

There are more non-negotiables - to be sure. But these are some of the bare minimum basics.

If you can't get honesty, respect, or safety inside your relationship, you're already past the expiration date. This is non-negotiable. You're better off by yourself.

I'm very clear about these.

I will not accept dishonesty in my relationship.

If I do... now I've opened myself up to deception. That's me aiding and abetting someone who is deciding to betray me.

There will be consequences for staying with someone who lies to you. Sooner or later.

I refuse to live someone else's lie. To me, the truth matters. The Bible says,

“No one who is dishonest will live in my house; no liars will stay around me.”

That about sums it up. You protect yourself from a world of hurt when you ditch the liars in your life. Most people don’t have that kind of clarity.

They can’t tell the difference between a safe and an unsafe person.

Someone trustworthy or not. Someone who they should keep around or let go of. Could life ever be so black and white? What about all the gray?

All I can say is my life was dysfunctional until I got rid of the liars. The chauffeur used to believe people’s lies — even after they had shown me they were untrustworthy.

Mike Tyson sees straight-through people.

If you’re out in the wild, and you see that someone you’re with practices deception, at a minimum, that would be someone I’d watch very closely. But more than likely, I’d stay away from them.

Some relationships are so unhealthy that your partner requires you to abandon yourself as a condition of being with them. They’re almost certainly not an intentionally malicious person.

They may not understand the ramifications of what it means to exist in a relationship with them.

Some people need to oppress others around them. It’s up to you to use your eyes and honor your judgment.

Until next time,

Anton

Dancer, Writer, Buddhist.



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